

Subject: Statement on Proposed Teacher Cert Rules

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Friends,

This message is to inform educators that, regarding the proposed changes to state Administrative Rules, I do not want to have a teacher certification system that threatens an educator's license on the basis of annual evaluations. Inasmuch, I want to assure educators in Michigan that before these proposed rules are approved by me, I will have any language removed that revokes or prevents teacher certification licensure based upon annual evaluations. I have the final authority on this matter.

The same way I was opposed to the state legislature changing the standard from "reasonable and just cause" to "arbitrary and capricious" for tenure, I am not going to inadvertently do the same thing with a teacher's license.

While I feel that it is vitally important that every teacher be effective in the classroom, everyone deserves a chance to improve and become effective in the most appropriate and supportive situations.

When developing Administrative Rules, the worst case scenarios for those it impacts must be considered.

The proposed rules, as written now (that will be changed before they are finalized, as noted above), provide for the loss of certification for teachers after a number of years of not being evaluated as "Highly Effective" or "Effective." Even for new teachers, if they don't come out of their Teacher Prep programs well-prepared; get hired in an environment for which they are not adequately trained; are not afforded effective job-embedded professional development; or have to deal with an adverse supervisor, there are circumstances where this process could be potentially abused. I would not want an educator's license to be in jeopardy under these conditions.

A teacher's livelihood should not be at stake when others, who would not be accountable, have a major role in the effectiveness or the evaluation of that teacher. There are just too many variables beyond the teacher's control.

For those educators who truly aren't effective or are negatively impacting students, districts already have means available to remove the teacher, without the severity of taking away his/her license. That teacher would still then be able to get help, improve identified weaknesses, and possibly be hired in a more suitable educational setting.



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